

Request for Proposals Create a Model Community To Include all Citizens

The Pathways to Independence project within the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services is designing an initiative to develop model communities for people with disabilities in Wisconsin. This project is funded by Wisconsin's Medicaid Infrastructure Grant (MIG), which aims to maximize employment for people with disabilities.

Healthy, vibrant communities fully engage and use their social, economic and cultural resources to improve the quality of life for *all of their citizens*. This grant funding opportunity allows a community to use its available resources to better provide support and services to residents of all ages including those who have a disability.

Community integration is a key factor in obtaining and maintaining competitive employment for people with disabilities. Asset Based Community Development is a model which uses the assets, resources and strengths of all citizens to improve the community. Following the model communities approach developed in states such as New Hampshire and Connecticut, and inspired by the work of John McKnight on community asset development, this initiative will engage one or two municipalities in planning a broad community development strategy focused on the inclusion and employment of people with disabilities.

Purpose of the Grant

The Model Communities grant is made available to improve the quality of life for all its citizens. Funds will be provided to a community to develop a comprehensive plan that addresses the physical, social, policy and attitudinal barriers that prevent people with disabilities from fully participating in community life. Individual planning grant awards will not exceed \$10,000 for the period of July 1, 2006 – December 31, 2006. Up to two awards will be granted. Plans will be evaluated for possible implementation grants in 2007. Individual implementation grant awards will not exceed \$80,000 for the period of January 1, 2007 – December 31, 2007.

Grant funds must be used for the development of a ***plan*** for community development. Grant funds may be used for project staff salaries, consultant fees, data collection and analysis, meetings, supplies, project-related travel and other direct project expenses, including a limited amount of equipment deemed essential to the project. **Grant funds may not be used to provide direct services**, to construct or renovate facilities, for lobbying, or as a substitute for funds currently being used to support similar activities. Funding received through this grant may not be used to supplant current local, state or federal funds received by the applicant.

The successful applicant will create a **community coalition** including people with disabilities, employers (or businesses), community organizations and local government.

The following are the desired outcomes of the Model Communities planning grant project for year one:

- Selected site(s) has broad community development strategy focused on the inclusion and competitive employment of people with disabilities.
- Selected site(s) are prepared to implement model community development strategies.
- Community partners develop a vision of a fully inclusive community and have knowledge of the components necessary to realize that vision.
- Pathways to Independence has a new process for engaging community partners.
- Wisconsin has a new model for promoting community inclusion and employment for people with disabilities.

Benefits of the project for your community may include:

- Developing sustainable employment
- Strengthening networks for competitive employment of people with disabilities
- Increasing a sense of community and mutual trust
- Enhancing collaborative partnership within a community
- Creating a safe, amicable community atmosphere and culture
- Boosting the local economy
- Creating an asset-based community development model
- Changing attitudes or public perceptions
- Developing an asset map of the community
- Broadening employment base
- Improving quality of life for all citizens
- Improving community involvement

Anticipated community partners:

- Individual level: people with disabilities, community leaders, residents/neighbors, academic experts, employers and co-workers
- Community level: non-profit community organizations, local governments, neighborhood centers
- Institution level: Chambers of Commerce, Departments of Commerce, Department of Workforce Development, human service agencies, job-training centers, Job Centers, labor unions and schools

Who may apply and what are the qualifications:

Applicants must have a core leadership team at the time of submission and designate a lead agency.

- A. The lead agency for the application must hold a certificate of good standing with the Secretary of State or have a fiscal agent with such a certificate, and be eligible to receive federal funds. Applicants must be willing to provide all necessary program and financial reports.

Municipalities are also eligible to apply and need not have a certificate of good standing.

- B. Applications will be accepted from any geographic area of the state. Such areas do not have to be limited by any specific political or other existing boundary or designation. Communities may represent either a small segment of a municipality; such as a neighborhood, multiple municipalities, tribal lands or any other description of community that shares a common interest that is consistent with the purposes of this grant. Communities with a population of 5,000-20,000 people are recommended to increase the likelihood of success.
- C. Applicants shall have or demonstrate the capacity to facilitate, collaborate, coordinate and develop a wide range of community supports for all individuals within the area identified in the proposal.
- D. Applicants must have representation from employers and local officials (elected, employed or appointed). In addition, a broad cross section of the community should be represented: such as people with disabilities, social services organizations, civic groups and faith-based groups as well as agencies that represent education, housing, transportation and other interests that support members of the targeted population.

Proposal Requirements and Format

The main body of the proposal (not including budget) must not exceed 15 double-spaced typewritten pages in 12-point Times New Roman font. Appendices may accompany the body of the proposal but may not exceed an additional 10 pages. Applicant must respond to each of the following numbered sections. Please identify each section by title given in this request for proposals.

Section I. Contact Information

Complete contact information of the applicant (i.e. name of project lead(s), address, phone numbers, fax, e-mail, etc.).

Section II. Problem Statement

A clear statement of the problems/barriers that prevent people with disabilities from being included in your community.

Section III. Narrative and Goal Statements

A complete narrative addresses the following:

- A. A description of why it is important for your community to include all citizens.

B. A description of how your community could improve a minimum of two of the following:

- Social Participation/Recreation
- Affordable/Accessible Transportation
- Universal Design (a framework for the design of places, things and information that focuses on the user, on the most diverse range of people operating in the widest array of situations without special or separate design)
- Health
- Public Awareness/Attitude
- Affordable/Accessible Housing
- Fully Inclusive Education

C. Discuss how the activities you described from the above list will support the competitive employment of people with disabilities and the inclusion of all persons within the community.

Section IV. Collaborators

A statement identifying partnerships and alliances within your community coalition including members and contact information. Include a brief statement of the role of each collaborator within grant activities. Letters of support from all key collaborators must be attached to the proposal (not included in the 10-page limit for appendices).

Section V. Qualifications of Personnel

Include a brief biography of key personnel for the project as an appendix.

Section VI. Evaluation

Pathways to Independence intends to arrange for an evaluation of both the process and impact of the Model Communities projects, at no cost to the grantee.

Please describe:

- How you will facilitate the successful evaluation of your project.
- What type of research and evaluation would benefit your project.
- How you will preserve the emerging institutional memory of your project, including record keeping and storage.

Section VII. Budget

A complete line item budget for your planning process should be submitted as part of your 15-page proposal.

Technical Assistance:

Comprehensive technical assistance will be available to the successful applicant(s) including training and facilitation of an asset based community development process.

Disclaimer:

The grantor reserves the right to reject any and all proposals that do not adequately address the nature of the problem or issue identified.

Deadline:

Applicants must submit one paper copy of the completed proposal and one electronic version on PC-compatible disk.

Deadline for submission of application is Thursday, June 8, 2006.

Send proposals to:

**Department of Health and Family Services
Model Communities Project
Attention: Jennifer Neugart
1 W. Wilson Street, Room 1150
Madison, Wisconsin 53703**

All questions must be submitted electronically to NeugaJW@dhfs.state.wi.us by May 22, 2006. A question and answer document containing all questions submitted will be posted at <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/rfp/#DDES> by May 26, 2006.

If you have technical difficulties submitting questions electronically, please contact Jenny Neugart, at 608-266-8778.

Notification of decision will be made by June 30, 2006, with grant start up around July 3, 2006.

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